

THE PLYMOUTH BANNER.

"THE STARSPANGLED BANNER. LONG MAY IT WAVE, OER THE LAND OF THE FREE AND THE HOME OF THE BRAVE."

A Family Newspaper, Devoted to Education, Morals, Science, Agriculture, Commerce, Politics, Markets, General Intelligence, Foreign and Domestic News.

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THE OLD MAN'S STORY.

A THRILLING SKETCH.

I shall never forget the commencement of the temperance reformation. I was a child at the time, of some ten years of age. Our home had every comfort, and my parents idolized me, their child. Wine was often on the table, and both my father and mother frequently gave it to me in the bottom of the morning glass.

One Sunday at church, a startling announcement was made to our people. I knew nothing of its purport, but there was much whispering among the men. The pastor said that on the next evening there would be a meeting, and an address upon the evil of intemperance in the use of alcoholic drinks. He expressed himself ignorant of the object of the meeting and could not say what course would be best to pursue in the matter.

The subject of the meeting came up at our table after the service, and I questioned my father about it with all the curious eagerness of a child. The whippers and words which had been dropped in my hearing, clothed the affair with a great mystery to me, and I was all eagerness to learn the strange thing. My father said it was merely some scheme to unite church and State.

The night came, and groups of people gathered on the tavern steps, and I heard the jest and laugh, and saw drunken men come reeling out of the bar-room. I urged my father to let me go, but he at first refused. Finally, thinking that it would be an innocent gratification of my curiosity, he put on his hat and we passed across the green to the church. I remember well how the people appeared as they came in, seeming to wonder what kind of an exhibition was to come off.

In the corner was the tavern keeper, and around him a number of friends. For an hour the people of the place continued pouring in, until there was a fair house full. All were curiously watching at the door wondering what would appear next. The pastor stole in and took a seat behind a pillar under the gallery as if doubtful of the propriety of being in church at all.

Two men finally came in and went to the altar and took their seats. All eyes were fixed upon them, and a general stillness prevailed throughout the house.

The men were unlike in appearance, one being short, thick-set in build, the other tall and well formed. The younger had the manner and dress of a clergyman, a full round face, and a quiet good natured look, as he leisurely looked round over the audience.

But my childish interest was all in the old man. His broad, deep chest, and unusual height, looked giant-like as he strode up the aisle. His hair was white, his brow deeply seamed with furrows, and around his handsome mouth, lines of calm and touching sadness. His eye was black and restless, and kindled as the tavern keeper uttered a low jest aloud. His lips were compressed, and a crimson flush went and came over his pale cheek. One arm was off above the elbow, and there was a scar above the right eye.

The younger finally arose and stated the object of the meeting, and asked if there was a clergyman present, and if so, for him to open by prayer.

Our pastor kept his seat, and the speaker himself made a short address, at the conclusion calling on any one present to make remarks.

The pastor arose under the gallery, and attacked the position of the speaker, using the arguments which I have often heard used since, and concluded by denouncing those engaged in the movement as meddlesome fanatics, who wished to break up the time honored usages of good society, and injure the business of respectable men. At the conclusion of his remarks, the tavern keeper and his friends got up a cheer, and the current of feeling was evidently against the strangers and their plan of reformation.

While the pastor was speaking, the old man had fixed his dark eye upon him,

and leaned forward, as if to catch every word.

As the pastor took his seat, the old man arose, his tall form towering in its symmetry, and his chest swelling as he inhaled his breath through his thin dilated nostrils. To me, at the time there was something awe-inspiring and grand in the appearance of the old man as he stood with his eye full upon the audience, his teeth shut hard, and a silence like that of death throughout the whole church.

He bent his gaze upon the tavern keeper, and that peculiar eye lingered and kindled for half a moment.

The scar grew red upon his forehead, and beneath the heavy eye brows his eyes glittered and glowed like a serpent's. The tavern keeper quailed before that searching glance, and I felt a relief when the old man withdrew his gaze. For a moment, he seemed lost in thought, and then in a low tremulous tone he commenced. There was a depth in that voice, a thrilling pathos and sweetness which riveted every heart in the house before the first period had been rounded. My father's attention had become fixed on the eye of the speaker, with an interest which I never before seen him exhibit. I can but briefly remember the substance of what the old man said, though the scene is as vivid before me as any I have ever witnessed.

"My friends! I am a stranger in your village, and I trust I may call you friends. A new star has arisen, and there is hope in the dark night which hangs like a pall of gloom over our country." With a thrilling depth of voice, the speaker looked his hands together, and, while the house was as still as death he continued—

"Oh, God! thou who lookest with compassion upon the most erring of children, I thank thee that a brazen serpent has been lifted, upon which the drunkard can look and be healed—that a beacon has burst out upon the darkness that surrounds him, which shall guide back to honor and heaven, the bruised and weary wanderer."

It is strange what power there is in some voices. The speaker's voice was low and measured, but a tear trembled in every tone, and before I knew why, a tear dropped upon my hand, followed by others like rain drops. The old man brushed one from his own eyes, and with a sigh continued:

"Men and Christians! You have just heard that I am a vagrant and fanatic—I am not. As God knows my own sad heart, I came here to do good. Hear me and be just."

"I am an old man, standing alone at the end of life's journey. There is a deep sorrow in my heart and tears in my eyes. I have journeyed over a dark and beaconless ocean, and all life's hopes have been wrecked. I am without friends, home or kindred upon earth, and look with longing to the rest of the night of death. It was not so once."

No one could withstand the touching pathos of the old man. I noticed a tear trembling on the lid of my father's eye, and I no more felt ashamed of my own.

"No my friends, it was not so once—away over the dark waves which have wrecked my hopes, there is the blessed light of happiness and home. I reach again convulsively for the shrines of the household idols that once were mine, now mine no more on earth."

The old man seemed looking away through fancy upon some bright vision, his lips apart and his finger extended, involuntarily turned in the direction where it was pointed, dreading to see some shadow invoked by its magic movements.

"Once had a mother. With her old heart crushed with sorrow, she went down to the grave. I once had a wife, a fair, angel-hearted creature as ever smiled in an earthly home. Her eye as mild as a summer sky, and her heart as faithful and true as ever guarded and cherished a husband's love. Her blue eye grew dim as the floods of sorrow washed away its brightness, and the living heart I wrung until every fibre was broken. I once had a noble, brave and beautiful boy, but he was driven out from the ruins of his home, and my old heart yearns to know if he yet lives. I once had a babe, a sweet tender blossom; but these hands destroyed it, and it liveth with one who loveth children."

"Do not be startled friends—I am not a murderer in the common acceptance of that term. Yet there is a light in my evening sky. A spirit mother rejoices over the return of her prodigal son. The wife smiles upon him who again turns back to virtue and honor. The child angel visits me at night fall, and I feel the hallowing touch of a tiny palm upon my feverish cheek. My brave boy, if he yet lives, would forgive the sorrowing old man for the treatment which drove him into the world, and the blow that maimed him for life. God forgive me for the ruin I have brought upon me and mine."

He again wiped a tear from his eye. My father watched him with a strange intensity, and a countenance unusually pale and excited by some strong emotion,

I was once a fanatic, and madly followed the malign light which led to ruin. I was a fanatic when I sacrificed my wife, children happiness and home to the accursed demon of the bowl.

I once adored the gentle being whom I injured so deeply.

I was a drunkard. From respectability and affluence, I plunged into degradation and poverty. I dragged my family down with me. For years I saw her cheek pale, and her step grow weary. I left her alone amid the wreck of her home, and she died at the tavern. She never complained, yet she and the children went hungry for bread.

One New Year's night, I returned to the hut where charity had given us roof. She was yet up, and shivering over the coals. I demanded food but she burst into tears and told me there was none. I fiercely ordered her to get some. She turned her eyes sadly upon me, the tears falling fast over her pale cheek. At this moment the child awoke and sent up a famished wail starting the despairing mother like a serpent's sting.

We have no food, James—have had none for several days. I have nothing for the babe. My once kind husband, must we starve?

That pleading face and those streaming eyes and the feeble wail of the child, maddened me and I—yes I struck her a fierce blow in the face and she fell forward upon the hearth.

The furies of hell boiled in my bosom, and with deeper intensity as I felt I had committed a wrong. I had never struck Mary before, but now some terrible impulse bore me on, and I stooped down as well as I could in my drunken state and clenched both of my hands in her hair.

God of mercy, James! exclaimed my wife, as she looked up in my fiendish countenance, you will not kill us—you will not harm Willie and she sprang to the cradle and grasped him in her embrace. I caught her again by the hair and dragged her to the door, and as I lifted the latch, the wind burst in with a cloud of snow. With the yell of a fiend, I still dragged her on and hurled her out into the darkness and storm. With a wild hal hal I closed the door and turned the bottom; her pleading moans mingling with the wail of the blast, and sharp cry of her babe. But my work was not complete.

I turned to a little bed where lay my older son, and snatched him from his slumbers, and against his half awakened struggles, opened the door and thrust him out. In the agony of fear he called me by a name I was no longer fit to bear, and locked his fingers into my side pocket. I could not wrench that frozen grasp away, and with the coolness of a devil, and was, shut the door upon the arm, and with my knife severed it at the wrist.

The speaker paused a moment and buried his face in his hands as if to shut out some fearful dream and his deep chest heaved like a storm-swept sea. My father had risen from his seat and was leaning forward his countenance bloodless, and the large drops standing on his brow. Chills crept back to my young heart, and I wished I was at home. The old man looked up, and I never have since beheld such mortal agony pictured upon a human face as there was on his.

"It was morning when I awoke and the storm had ceased, but the cold was intense. I first secured a drink of water and then looked in the accustomed place for Mary. As I missed her for the first time a shadowy scene of some horrible nightmare began to dawn upon my wandering mind. I thought I had a fearful dream, but involuntarily opened the door with a shuddering dread. As the door opened the snow burst in, followed by the fall of something across the threshold, scattering the snow, and striking the floor with a sharp, bad sound. My blood shot like red-hot arrows through my veins, and I rubbed my eyes to shut out the sight. It was—O! God how horrible! it was my own injured Mary and her babe frozen to ice! The ever true mother had bowed herself over the child to shield it, and wrapped all her clothing around it, leaving her own person stark and bare to the storm. She had placed her hair over the face of the child, and the sleet had frozen it to the white cheek. The frost was white in its half-opened eyes and upon its tiny fingers. I know not what became of my brave boy."

Again the old man bowed his head and wept and all that were in the house wept with him. My father sobbed like a child. In tones of low and heart-broken pathos, the old man concluded:

"I was arrested, and for long months I raved in delirium. I awoke, was sentenced to prison for ten years, but no fortunes could have been like those I endured within my own bosom. Oh, God, no!—I am not a fanatic. I wish to injure no one, but while I live, let me strive to warn others not to enter the path which has been so dark and fearful a one to me. I would see my wife and children beyond this vale of tears."

The old man sat down, but a spell as

deep and strong as that wrought by some wizard's breath rested upon the audience. The old man then asked the people to sign the pledge. My father leaped from his seat and snatched it eagerly. I had followed him, and as he hesitated a moment with the pen in the ink a tear fell from the old man's eye on the paper.

Sign it, sign it, young man. Angels would sign it. I would write my name there ten thousand times in blood would it bring back my loved and lost ones.

My father wrote: "Mortimer Hudson." The old man looked, wiped his tearful eyes, and looked again, his countenance alternately flushed with a death-like paleness.

"It is—no, it cannot be—yet how strange," muttered the old man. "Pardon sir, but that was the name of the brave boy."

My father trembled and held up his left arm from which the hand had been severed.

They looked for a moment in each other's eyes, both reeled and gasped—"My own injured boy!"

"My father!" They fell upon each other's necks until it seemed that their souls would grow and mingle into one.

"Let me thank God for this great blessing which has gladdened my guilt burdened soul," exclaimed the old man; and kneeling down, pouring out his heart in one of the most melting prayers I ever heard.

The old man is dead, but the lesson he taught his grand-child on the knee, as his evening sun went down without a cloud will never be forgotten. His fanaticism has lost none of its fire in my manhood's heart.

Important Indian Treaty.

An important Treaty has just been concluded with the Winnebago Indians, occupying the West bank of the Mississippi river in Minnesota, by which the tribe sell to the Government the tract of land now occupied by them, beginning at the mouth of Crow river, thence running up the Mississippi river to the mouth of Clear Water river; thence up said river to its source; thence on a line due west until it intersects the North Fork of Crow river; thence down said river to the place of beginning. A reservation is made for the right of way for the Pacific R. R.; also, for seventy-two sections for the use of the Stockbridge Indians, provided they wish to locate near the mouth of Crow river. By reference to Colton's map, it will be seen that the strip is about eighteen miles in width, on an average, and nearly one hundred miles long. We have heard it spoken of by Chicago citizens, who have visited the country, as being the most beautiful part of Minnesota, abounding in beautiful clear lakes, springs and streams, groves of timber, and rich rolling prairies,—in short a perfect paradise of a place. The Minnesota thus speaks of it:

"The tract is unequalled by any in the Territory for its vast agricultural, manufacturing and commercial advantages. The soil is unsurpassingly rich; the timber heavy and abundant; the whole extent is beautifully watered by clear and running streams—the latter affording unequalled mill privileges. It is just such a country as would be apt to attract the eye of the white settler; and since its title passed into the hands of the United States, one year ago, several 'claims' have been made upon it, on which the occupants are now living. The tract now fronts some thirty miles on the Mississippi, and looks across to the East side of that river upon improved farms and flourishing settlements. The southern line of this new Winnebago boundary comes down to within 35 miles of St. Paul, opposite Itasca. Here, at this extreme point south, we understand it is contemplated to locate the Agency."

Chicago Tribune.

DOUBLE TRACKS THE ONLY SAFETY.—The frightful calamity on the Providence and Worcester railroad is another admonition of the necessity for having double tracks on our much travelled railroads. This is the only safeguard against such slaughters as this and the similar one at Camden and Amboy road, which have together hurled at least twenty human beings into eternity within the space of a few days. If each of these roads had had two tracks, then the murderous carelessness of the engineers and conductors might have been harmless; but so long as every train has to pass over the same rails, travelers will be at the mercy of such officers, who are constantly liable to fatal errors, either from momentary neglect, trifling accident, or slight derangement of their watches.—Detroit Free Press.

MURDERED BY NEGROES.—We learn from the Hawesville (Ky.) Pick and Plover, of the 13th, that Peter Yerger was murdered by three of his slaves, near Versailles in that county, a few days ago.

"Sambo, what am your 'pinion ob rats?"

"Why, I think de one dat has de shortest tail, will get in de hole de quickest!"

ARRIVAL OF THE ARABIA.

New York, Aug. 23.
The Cunard steamship Arabia, from Liverpool, August 13th, arrived at 7 this morning, making the passage in 9 days and 17 hours.

Nothing definite has transpired in the Turkish question, but the belief is that it was terminated peacefully. Definite news from St. Petersburg was expected to reach London on the 16th. The London Morning Post asserts that the Principalities will be evacuated the first week in September, by Russia, and soon after, the British and French fleets will leave the Turkish waters.

Funds have materially improved, but the market continues dull.
A great naval review at Portsmouth, by Queen Victoria, had taken place.

Nothing important from France. The wheat crops were mostly in, and averaged only about two-thirds the usual crop.

The missionary King's affair at Greece was drawing to a satisfactory conclusion.

The overland mail was telegraphed. The steamship Monumental City was wrecked on her passage from Port Philip to Sidney, and thirty-five passengers perished.

The ship Arab, with the Bombay mail on board, foundered, and 175 Lascars were drowned.

The King of Ava was more peacefully disposed towards the British.

The Chinese Imperialists were preparing to take Amoy. The insurgent forces were within four days' march of Peking. A private telegraph says they had beaten back an imperial fleet from before Nankin and had concluded not to attack Canton till September.

LIVERPOOL MARKETS.—The following is from Richardson & Bro's Circular of Aug. 12: "At this day's market, the attendance was very limited. It ruled lifeless throughout. Wheat was freely offered at the reduction of Tuesday, without finding purchasers. Flour steady at former prices, but the business transacted was limited. Corn, whether on the spot or to arrive, was little inquired for at this day's market. Genesee and Ohio white wheat, 7s 6d a 7s 8d a 7s 9d; red, 7s 4d a 7s 6d per 70 lbs. Philadelphia and Baltimore flour, 27s; Western, 26s a 26s 6d; heated, 24s a 25s.

"Provisions.—In beef and pork, almost nothing has been done. Bacon in better demand.

"Lard dearer; sales at 56 a 57s, and a few hbls, fine, 59s. Supply in few hands. Tallow declined 6d a lb per cwt. Cheese market bare. Butter much wanted."

LATEST BY TELEGRAPH.

LONDON, August 13.

Dispatches from St. Petersburg, dated the 5th, have been received in Paris.—They state that the Emperor has definitely accepted the propositions of the four powers. A despatch from Trieste states that the Porte accepted without modification, the treaty drawn up at Vienna. An extraordinary ambassador was to leave Constantinople for St. Petersburg with the Sultan's decision, as soon as the Russian troops are ordered to evacuate the Principalities.

A letter from Constantinople to July 21st, says there is intense excitement there, in consequence of the refusal of the Hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia to obey the summons to repair to Constantinople. The old Turkish party were so indignant that fears were entertained for the safety of the city.

NEW ORLEANS, August 23.
The number of interments to-day was 270, including 240 of yellow fever. Total number for the week, 1,130 of fever. Deaths yesterday, 290.

NEW YORK, August 23.

The Pacific will be up at 9 o'clock. She is now coming up the bay.

Prof. Bach, of Harvard College, died to-day at his residence.

FURTHER BY THE ARABIA.

NEW YORK, August 23.

In England, the crops had sustained no check, and the weather continued favorable. The potato crop in Ireland was also satisfactory.

In France a rumor has been circulated that the coronation of the Emperor and Empress will take place in September.

BOSTON, Aug. 23.

We have dates from Port au Prince.—The yellow fever still exists. Political affairs quiet.

BALTIMORE, Aug. 23.

The Board of Health of Mobile commenced reporting deaths by fever on the 17th. On that day there were four deaths.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23.

Fayette A. Ringgold has been appointed Consul to Hayti. J. R. Margate, of Baltimore, has accepted the Secretaryship of Legation to Peru.

A mass of copper weighing, 6,300 lbs. is now on its way from the North American mine at Eagle river, to the World's Fair. This mass was cut off of a little chunk weighing about one hundred and fifty tons!

THE PRESS.—The New York Tribune has the following just remarks in relation to the conductors of the Press. It is but due to the fraternity that they should exhibit that self-respect which marks every other profession, and assume their proper position before the public. The Tribune in speaking of the Plymouth celebration says:

Mr. Everett was the orator of the day; if there were any selected in particular, his speech being the long-st. It exhibited due elaboration, every word being written out and committed to memory beforehand. A success, therefore, is assured to Mr. Everett by such elaboration.

We are due admirers of Mr. Everett, without being able to discover in him indisputable superiority over every other writer in America, either in thought or language. The superiority of styles is due in a measure to the time allowed for elaboration, and we see no great wonder in a deliberately prepared speech producing effect and exacting applause, when we look at the mass of good writing in the American Daily Press, which is turned off, written up to twelve, one or two o'clock at night, after the toils and disturbances of editorial life during the day. If we take the scholarship and learning, and public experience now engaged in the Press of this country, it will not suffer in comparison with that of any other profession, the Senate of the United States added thereto. Indeed, in point of bold generic ideas, thrown out devoid of fear or favor, not polished till their native force is rubbed away; but hurled on the paper glowing in freshness the comparison is altogether in favor of the press. The politician has to please his constituents, and to placate this or that section of country; but the editor, whose capital and subscription-list are beyond the influence of single persons or places, may, if he have the power, continue to speak like an inspired giant, to myriad hearers. The politician, too, is always more or less impressed unduly with the value of function. He believes in Army, and Navy, and Post Office, and Mint and Foreign Missions, and all the inherited parade of power by which cunning contrives to gain simplicity. But the editor may believe in self-government, and in the power of man over such accident.

Trouble at the Fishing Grounds.

Boston, August 18.

The schooners Snow Squall and Emily Swift have arrived from the North East fishing grounds. Both vessels had been boarded by the British gun-boats and cutters, and names of vessels, number of crew, and quantity of mackerel taken down. They report the schooner Hannibal as chased out of Fox river where she had put in for a harbor about two weeks since. They saw nothing of the American squadron. The British steamer Devastation was seen cruising about the fishing grounds.

Another account says that American vessels are not allowed to enter the Bay of Chaleur.

A steamer and several cutters were at the mouth to intercept all who attempted to enter. It is reported that one of the vessels had taken a swivel out of the schooner Garland of Newburyport.

In some parts of the bay mackerel were plenty.

We have noticed in some of our exchanges that the weed commonly known as "Dog Fennel," is to be made subservient under the hand of Science to the "cause of suffering humanity" in the cure of that scourge of the West—the ague. We have also learned that the flower is becoming very fashionable in the forming of bouquets. A friend of ours who has recently been favored with one, of which this newly discovered beauty formed a very prominent part, has kindly permitted us to read the note of the charming Donor which accompanied it. We give it to the best of our recollection "verbatim et literatim," and beg pardon if we have betrayed confidence:

"Dear—
I send u bi the boy a buket of flours. They is like mi luv for u. The nite shaid means kepe dark. The dog fenil means i am ure slavi."

Rosis fald and posis pail
Mi luv for u shall never fale."

Delphi Journal.

We understand that Messrs. S. S. Ball & Co., contractors on the L. E. W. & St. L. R. R., have taken the building of the piers of the Peru & Indianapolis Rail Road B-edge which are not yet finished, and that it is their intention to complete them in three weeks.—Peru Sentinel.

GOLD IN IOWA.—A paragraph in the Clayton county (Iowa) Herald mentions a report that gold has been discovered in Hardin county, and that numbers of persons had gone thither to seek it. It is stated, however, that the specimens of gold found there are of inferior value.

Remember, the best tonic is fun, the best physician a joker. For giving a tone to the stomach, one good hearty laugh is worth all the pills ever patented.